



Live Well, Work Well

Employee Health Benefits Bulletin

April 2021

Bridgewater-Raritan Regional Schools

After Your COVID-19 Vaccine

Timely Tip: time for a spring cleaning? A clean home can boost your immune system and help you avoid illness and allergies. Decluttered living spaces often reduce stress and depression. The [American Cleaning Institute](#) reports that the [bathroom](#) is the room cleaned the most often.

The COVID-19 vaccine is a critical step toward returning to a sense of normalcy. Hopefully you've received your COVID-19 vaccination by now. If so, you may wonder what's next. The below Q&A, compiled from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), may help.

How long before the vaccine begins to work? Your body needs time to build protection after any vaccine. COVID-19 vaccines that require two doses may not protect you until one to two weeks after your second shot.

Can I still get COVID-19?

While studies show that the vaccines are around 95% effective, it is still possible to contract COVID-19. However, experts believe that the vaccine helps prevent serious illness even if you do get COVID-19.

Can I still spread the virus to others?

Even if asymptomatic, it is still possible to spread COVID-19 to others. So, it's important to continue taking steps to

protect yourself and others by practicing these established safety measures:

- Mask up (cover your nose and mouth)
- Stay at least six feet from others
- Avoid crowded, poorly ventilated areas
- Wash your hands often

Experts need to understand more about vaccine protections before revising safety guidelines.

Do I need to quarantine if I'm exposed to someone with a case of COVID-19? The CDC advises that vaccinated individuals

exposed to a case of COVID-19 are not required to quarantine if [fully vaccinated](#), are within three months of completing a

vaccine series, and have remained asymptomatic since the COVID-19 exposure. If all three criteria are not met, one should quarantine as a precaution.

Use all available tools to stay safe and stop the spread! Find the latest [vaccine news](#) and more at [horizonblue.com](#).



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Alcohol Awareness

Observed every April, **Alcohol Awareness Month** means to raise awareness by highlighting how alcohol-use disorders affect individuals, families, and communities. This year is especially critical as COVID-19 restrictions and stress can increase susceptibility to substance misuse, addiction, and relapse. In fact, alcohol sales in the United States have grown nearly 30% in the last year.

Alcohol abuse can affect both your personal and professional life. Prolonged drinking puts you at risk for developing serious health complications—such as high blood pressure, heart disease, liver disease, and stroke—and can trigger other life-threatening consequences.

Be aware of the warning signs. Alcohol use disorder can be mild, moderate, or severe, based on the number of symptoms you experience. Keep in mind that symptoms often occur at the same time. Common signs include:

- Irritability or mood swings
- Poor coordination
- Signs of slurred speech
- Blackouts or short-term memory loss
- Drinking alone or in secrecy
- Risky behaviors like drunk driving

If you or a loved one are concerned about alcohol use, talk with your doctor or contact the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Service Administration at (800) 662-HELP (4357) / [samhsa.gov](https://www.samhsa.gov).



Healthy Recipe

Zucchini Slaw

Ingredients

- 2 c. zucchini, coarsely shredded
- 2 c. cabbage, shredded
- 1 carrot, shredded
- 2 green onions, sliced
- ½ c. radishes, sliced
- 1/3 c. mild salsa
- 1/3 c. low-fat mayonnaise

Preparation

1. Drain shredded zucchini by pressing between paper towel layers.
2. Place in large bowl; add cabbage, carrot, onions, and radishes.
3. In small bowl, combine remaining ingredients.
4. Pour over vegetables and toss.
5. Cover and chill at least 1 hour; serve.

Each serving provides 55 calories, 3g total fat, 1g saturated fat, 1g protein, 171mg sodium, 7g carbohydrates, 2g dietary fiber, and 4g total sugars.

National Health Observances

April

Alcohol Awareness Month

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration
[samhsa.gov](https://www.samhsa.gov)

Testicular Cancer Awareness Month

Testicular Cancer Awareness Foundation
[testicularcancerawarenessfoundation.org](https://www.testicularcancerawarenessfoundation.org)

National Autism Awareness Month

Autism Society
[autism-society.org](https://www.autism-society.org)

May

Skin Cancer Prevention Month

American Academy of Dermatology
[aad.org](https://www.aad.org)

Mental Health Month

Mental Health America
[mhanational.org](https://www.mhanational.org)